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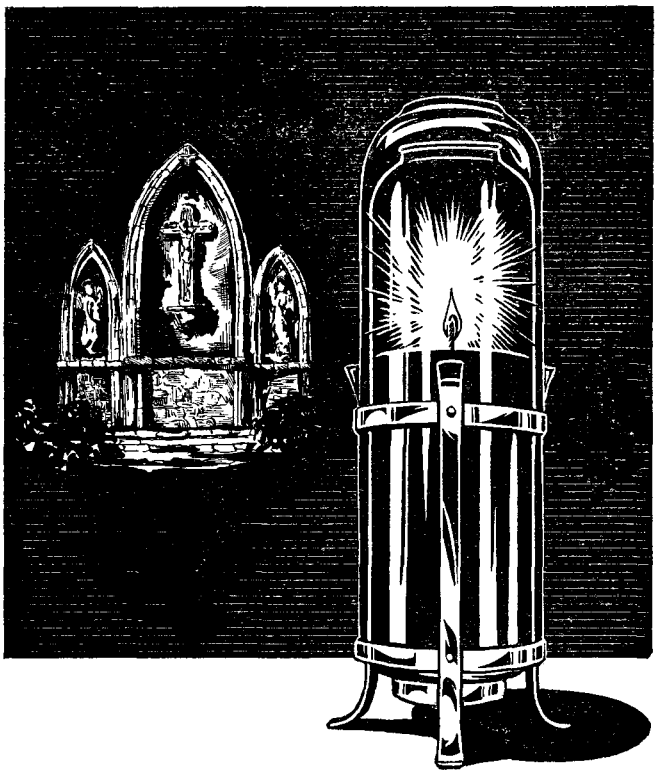

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THIS WEEK

Week by Week 483

Plight of the Intellectual
by Thomas Molnar 487

Dominican Theologians of Islam
by James Kritzeck 490

Partners—But What Kind?
by Charles Henry Lee 492

Indian at a Summer School
by John C. Cort 494

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 495

Of Note 496

Communications 497

Books 499

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The Commonweal

week by week

CERTAIN USES OF CREDIT

THE fact that the bogeys of the parents' generation often fade away for their children should serve as an advantage in the continuing American effort to raise living standards overseas. Doubtless the European horror of standardization is less vehement now than it was in the less harried '20's. The tyranny of the production line seems less terrifying than it once did; after years of outright suffering and extreme deprivation the peoples of Europe are eager to partake of some of the material advances of recent years.

But although widespread prosperity on the American model would impart strength and stability to the nations of Western Europe, there are still many influential elements that greatly oppose the changes that would be required to bring that about. Among them are those of the owning or managerial class who have been doing very well personally under a limited (or parceled out) market, low-production and a low-wage system. There are also the Communists and others who wish to perpetuate the inequities and resentments produced by European capitalism; they wish to preserve class-war tension at all hazards. Finally there are anti-American sentiments that can easily be aroused both by creating fears of American imperialism and by placing emphasis on ancient Europe's superior cultural values.

Many of these prejudices and bad feelings can be overcome—mitigated as they now are by a popular knowledge of, and desire for, the material advantages enjoyed by many American workers. And the imparting of the secrets of our higher living standards can serve as a boon to the nations of Europe (and other continents). It could make daily life less of a grinding hand-to-mouth struggle, engender hope, dissipate envy, engender political stability and generally strengthen the forces for peace. But such an effort demands great tact and patience on our part as well as a constant recognition of the many comparative advantages enjoyed by the United States.

It must be admitted that an ever-increasing use of credit to stimulate purchasing is one of the key devices in the present American set-up. Buying on the instalment plan is a practice which is a century old in this country; it is said to have originated with the furniture makers who were supplying the many new homes that were erected during the opening up of the American West. Today it is possible to buy almost anything by this method, even securities, although many financial advisers consider the process too costly. The sums which Americans owe on goods and services bought on instalments is constantly rising and is now in excess of twenty-five billion dollars. One out of four families is buying on the instalment plan.

THE extent to which an American worker can spread himself by this means is colorfully illustrated by a family recently described in the *Wall Street Journal*. The breadwinner is a young aviation mechanic whose basic wage is ninety dollars a week (take-home pay: $78.91). He has a wife and two children. He owns an $11,000 home with an electric refrigerator, a food freezer, a TV set, a power lawn mover, aluminum sash and screens and a 1952 car. He and his wife also have such special gadgets as an electric food mixer, a tape recorder and a deluxe electric coffee pot.

This young mechanic is a grammar school graduate who served two years in the Navy. His father supported a large family on his earnings from repairing shoes. The son has ascended to an entirely different level. His expenses average thirty dollars a week for food and one hundred twenty dollars per month for the total of his instalment payments on his home, for his food freezer, department stores and insurance. Yet he is thinking of adding another forty dollars a month expenses for a new car in the fall if he can manage it.

Of course such a set-up raises a lot of questions as to this American worker's sense of values. Also he is extending his credit potentialities to the hilt. Yet it must involve considerable courage

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to live on such a scale that a week's lay-off would tend to start one's whole personal economic structure tottering. At least the financial obligations he has assumed imply a confidence in the future which would often be very useful over there.

Under the impulsion of continuing economic expansion several countries in Western Europe have actually made a modest start in instalment selling. This competitive method is greatly on the increase in Great Britain, where, for one thing, it accounts for a high percentage of the sales of radios and TV sets. Yet credit is still much more difficult to obtain, and terms are stiffer in Western Europe, than they are here.

Ironically, war served to elevate American economic activity to its present, sustained fever pitch. To develop anything comparable Europe will require many stimuli. One of these could well be a marked extension of consumer credit with the errors and achievements of America's manifold experience serving as a partial guide.

THE BROKEN RECORD

SENATOR Joseph R. McCarthy (Republican of Wisconsin) has promised that he will "go to the people" and tell them how President Eisenhower "betrayed his trust" and advanced "the cause of tyranny and murder" at Geneva. "It may be too late," Mr. McCarthy says, "but in so far as my abilities and endurance permit, I shall see to it that this country does not die without the people of the country being given the chance to save it."

It is clear that with these words the Wisconsin Senator has brought us into the twenty-third year of treason, for words like these suggest nothing less than the crime Mr. McCarthy so freely ascribes to his political opponents. What is the basis for the Wisconsin Senator's charge? It seems to be the bare fact that Mr. Eisenhower went to Geneva at all. The mere act of speaking to a Soviet official means "sellout" in the McCarthy dictionary—and in this fact the reasons why Mr. McCarthy was so strongly opposed by so many Americans are again made plain.

This magazine has expressed serious misgivings over some aspects of the Geneva Conference. We do not share in the optimism that seems so widespread over its results. We do not think the Russian bear has suddenly become a dove of peace. We do not agree with President Eisenhower's assessment of the Soviet leaders' "peaceful" intentions. But all this seems to us an area for honorable debate—debate into which no words like "sellout" should be allowed to enter. Mr. McCarthy's outburst reminds us again how fortunate the nation is that his influence was finally eliminated from our national life.

THE PRISONERS

EVERY American must rejoice at the release from China of the eleven captured U.S. airmen—and hope and pray that the American civilians still held will soon follow them to freedom. But our joy should not blind us to the extraordinary nature of China's demands in this area.

The Chinese Communists are apparently intent on claiming sovereignty over all the Chinese who came to this country as students after World War II. Their idea is that all these people should be repatriated, and the suggestion by Premier Chou En-Lai is that a third country, presumably India, should be chosen to supervise this exchange of nationals. What seems to be involved in this suggestion is intolerable and cannot be accepted by the United States. We must cling to the principle of free choice, as we did in the cease-fire negotiations in Korea.

After World War II, approximately five thousand Chinese students came to this country. Of this number, about one hundred and twenty were later barred from returning to China because they had acquired special skills in this country (some

NEXT WEEK

MICHAEL HARRINGTON writes on the revolutionary challenge of modern history.

"There is a double aspect to the situation in which we live. On the one hand there is the necessary element of unpredictability in the political transition of our time: there is the constant 'if.' *If* the October Revolution had not been isolated, *if* Hitler had marched into Russia four weeks earlier (as he had planned), *if* Chiang Kai-shek had continued in association with the Comintern—then history would be different, unimaginably different. But on the other hand, there is an inevitable aspect to the revolution of our century—a factor beyond all *'if's.'* We cannot say, any longer: *if* there were no machines, *if* there were no cities, then society would be happier. The changes which machines and cities imply—centralization, urbanization, mechanization—are irreversible, short of an atomic holocaust, and we must live with them."

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in atomic physics, for example) which it was felt would strengthen materially the military strength of China. Of this number, only seventy-five indicated they wished to return to China. Whether the ban was wise in the first place is debatable, but in any case the U.S. lifted it last March, and since then about thirty-five Chinese have left for their homeland. The rest are still here, and presumably many have decided they really do not care to go.

The important point is that these Chinese—as well as the rest of the five thousand students and the approximately thirty thousand Chinese aliens in this country—are free to go or to stay as they please, and this is the way it should remain. Under no circumstances can the United States accept any agreement that will deny to these Chinese the right to choose freely. Repatriation that is voluntary and free from outside pressure is the only kind to which the United States can give its consent.

COMMUNICATIONS

FROM Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* to George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four* we have been warned against one of the major hazards of our times—the conditioned man. A recent communication from the Holy See repeated the warning.

Addressing a French group studying "Press, Film, Radio and Television in Contemporary Civilization," Pope Pius XII spoke of the danger that modern communication techniques may enslave rather than liberate man. "Modern society as well as the stability of its inner life largely depend on maintaining a balance between modern communication techniques and man's capacity for personal reaction," the Pope declared, and he spoke against the tendency of the press, radio and movies to reduce public opinion to "blind conformism."

We need these warnings. Threats to human freedom are not only military—spiritual and intellectual threats may be more dangerous, just as they are more subtle. Modern communications will benefit society only if society is constantly on guard against their abuse. For the revolution in communications is, in itself, neutral to society's good. It can be made either a blessing or a curse. It can be the instrument of either freedom or slavery, truth or propaganda, education or mass mediocrity. "Progress" is only what man makes it; it does not make itself. These are things of which the Church reminds us as the scientific revolution of our age continues to engulf us all.

BUSINESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION

THE President, it seems to us, made the only decision possible for him in the Talbott case. Mr. Talbott is reported to have done an excellent job as Air Secretary, but he showed an amazing insensitivity in the way he handled his private business affairs while in office. In view of Mr. Eisenhower's well known views on ethics in government, there was nothing he could do but accept Mr. Talbott's resignation.

Indeed, the promptness of the President's decision to let Mr. Talbott go may actually have helped his Administration in a tough situation. This is a fact Mr. Eisenhower might ponder as he contemplates the wreckage of the Dixon-Yates deal. Here the Administration handed the Democrats a wonderful campaign issue on a silver platter, by piling error upon error and by attempting to conceal what never could be concealed. The GOP has certainly not heard the last of this, and if it costs five million dollars for the government to get out of the contract, the deal will be worth ten times that to the Democrats as campaign material.

Add to all this the investigation of dollar-a-year men, which is hardly under way, plus the fuss the Hell's Canyon decision will cause in the Northwest, and the Democrats will have plenty of domestic material to give the Republicans trouble next year—if the President is not a candidate on a Peace and Prosperity platform. Mr. Eisenhower running on that platform still seems unbeatable. But if he turns out not to be a candidate in 1956, any other GOP candidate is likely to find the Big Business label that has long plagued the GOP more firmly attached than ever. And for that fact the Republicans have only themselves to blame.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING TRADITIONAL

JOSEPH V. Spagna, Purchase Commissioner of the City of New York, said recently that "it lends prestige to the city offices to have their heads riding in Cadillacs." He was backed up by Budget Director Abraham D. Beame who noted that the Cadillacs of New York city officials have always been replaced by Cadillacs.

We are happy to commend city officials in their zeal to maintain the best of old traditions. There has been too little respect for this sort of thing in this country. Look at the stability of the monarchy in the Mother Country: nothing but Gold Coaches. This is the sort of thing that has been scoffed at for too long in this young land.

We have it from a usually reliable source that

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an up and coming young assistant commissioner had the temerity to arrive at City Hall one morning in an M.G.—*and* a peak cap *and* a bored expression on his face—and has since been transferred to the outer marshes of South Queens. We cannot ascertain who was responsible for recommending this man, but, in any case, this is the sort of "get tough" policy we'd like to see more of.

We note, however, just in passing, that Mr. Spagna said that New York City had purchased eight Cadillacs and four *Buicks* in the first eight months of this year. Watch those Buicks, Spagna.

ROSE-COLORED GLASSES

WE are convinced that the growing strength of Western Europe has been a major factor in persuading the Russians to try blandishment rather than violence for a change. For this reason, some recent remarks of Marshal Tito strike us as particularly ominous. The danger of Soviet aggression, Tito told a group of visiting Americans, has subsided, and he thinks Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey should therefore relax their joint defensive efforts. There is no longer any question of Soviet control over the satellite states, he suggests, and for this reason he is apparently quite willing to enter into closer relations with these countries.

Few people will worry too much about Tito's fate. If he wants to stick his own head back in the bear's mouth, that is his business. Unfortunately, the Balkan alliance he now wants to soft-pedal plays a role of some importance in the defense of Western Europe, and it is not Tito's fate alone that is at stake. Happily, Greece and Turkey are not likely to be quite so trusting about Soviet intentions as Marshal Tito, and that is good. The important thing is that Tito's spirit of relaxation should not spread through the NATO countries in the months ahead. If that happens, the Soviet Union will really have proved that honey catches more flies than vinegar.

FREEZER-FOOD ADS

THE type of economy we have in this country today has been formed to a great extent by advertising—which is now a great industry in itself. Together with a great wealth of natural resources, a high degree of industrial mechanization, mass distribution and credit-buying it has helped build up a unique level of consumer consumption. All these factors are subject to abuse, and now it comes out that in the opinion of the New York State Attorney General's Office there have been abuses in the advertising methods of certain freezer-food-plan operators; hundreds of consumers have registered complaints of misrepresentation.

The companies in question sell home freezers on the instalment plan, and tie in sales of meat and vegetables on a year-round basis. The major food-plan operators in the New York City area have signed consent injunctions agreeing to regulate their advertising practices. Violation of the injunctions may be punishable by law, according to State Attorney General Jacob K. Javits. It is the first agreement of its kind on an industry-wide basis, according to Mr. Javits, but it will be followed in other businesses where "bait advertising" is used.

We have in this country a "free economy," a "liberal" economy. The "American Dream" is that any man can go out on his own, with a minimum of governmental interference and, if he works hard and is clever and has a bit of luck, can crown himself with wealth and glory. Of course, the economy isn't as "free" or "liberal" as it once was, and not as many can become king as dream of it. As things have turned out more and more regulation has become necessary because of abuses and technological development. And it is the duty of the government we have to help see to the common good, and to the peace and tranquillity of its citizens. As we mature we see that it is fitting that we prevent the strong from trampling on the weak.

It is a simple matter for the credulous to be defrauded by the clever "on the make." The sharp intellect of the ad-man is more than a match for those who have not been trained professionally in the manipulation of words for gain. The action of Mr. Javits, therefore, is welcome as a natural development in the process of our maturation as a socially responsible nation. Let us trust that it will serve as a warning to others to reform themselves before official legal action is necessary; it is good when this can be kept to a minimum.

Also involved in the freezer-food matter, perhaps, is an example of the pattern of pressure and counter-pressure that is such an integral part of our economic system. The food-plan operators are brash, up-and-coming, new competition for older, more traditional distributors, who are, perhaps, attempting to fight this competition through the "secular arm." We have seen the same process in the fight over the "fair trade" laws; and there have been attempts to "do something" about the "discount houses."

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Plight of the Intellectual

"INTELLECTUALS HAVE BEEN DISMISSED BY SOCIETY AT THE VERY TIMES WHEN THEY THOUGHT THEIR SERVICES MOST NEEDED"

THOMAS MOLNAR

THE position of intellectuals in twentieth century society is ambiguous. They are a floating, unanchored conglomerate, while the rest of society is organized in closely knit units, each with similar interests, income, functions, and ideas. In our society the intellectual has become a kind of displaced person, for however much he may accidentally be assimilated to one or another class, by his fundamental aspirations he remains outside of any recognizable circle.

The root of the problem lies in the intellectual's changed social-political position. For many centuries, indeed from the beginning of history, intellectual leadership came from the sheltered heights of princely rule or from religion. Whatever their official designation, the king and the priest, often the two in one person, were representatives of an authority which was clothed in mystery and reverence. They provided that charismatic leadership of which Max Weber and Paul Tillich speak. This leadership had its origins in pre-history, and it gave voice to transcendental values by which countless generations were to live. King and Church eventually yielded some of their authority to laymen —scribes, poets, philosophers—but these, even while expressing certain new ideas, continued to share in the ancient power and prestige of the lawgivers who supported them.

Today, however, intellectuals have lost the princely and ecclesiastical support that formerly gave them status, and have developed no power of their own to replace it. Since the Industrial Revolution they have become a separate, independent class, unattached to any center of socio-political authority, which itself is constantly changing. The society that intellectuals helped to emancipate has become self-assured, self-sufficient, with values of its own—values with which intellectuals often feel no identification. Because, except for a brief and illusory moment during the eighteenth, and then again in the early nineteenth century, the aspirations of modern society have not coincided with those of the intellectuals: intellectuals, indeed, have been dismissed by society at the very times when they themselves thought their services most needed.

What happened was that the political emancipation that came at the end of the eighteenth century made suspect not only the ruling classes of the past, but also, by association, the philosophers and artists who had been the ruling classes' courtiers—and this suspicion, although one hundred and fifty years old, is far from dead: John Dewey and his disciples would practically exclude from the education of youth those authors who "attempted to justify rationally the religious-tribal beliefs, moral preoccupations and the privileges of their noble masters."

The plight of the intellectual, then, consists in his rootlessness. Where he expected most he has benefited least: from revolutions he helped kindle he has emerged defeated, his enthusiasms harnessed, his hopes extinguished. The fate of the artist in the Soviet Union, that center of so many intellectuals' aspirations, is typical: only in official slogans is the term "intellectual" mentioned in company with "peasants and workers"; in reality the intellectual is a distrusted third party, suspect and whipped into obedience by his masters.

THE irony of the matter is that the plight of the modern intellectual might have been foreseen. With sufficient insight intellectuals might have anticipated—as men like Tocqueville, Burckhardt and others actually did anticipate—that once a democratic way of life was established, the triumphant masses would see no need to curtsy before things that remain for them forever unintelligible, and therefore forever frightening or ridiculous. Values, intellectual and spiritual, can be *imposed* by one class on another only if the class which imposes them represents that creative minority of which Toynbee speaks, and the class which receives them remains an anonymous majority ready to follow and imitate.

What the apostles of democracy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries failed to see is that values are born, live and die within the class only, and that

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the experience other classes may have of these values is purely vicarious. When, therefore, the superiority of one class over another was made, politically, a thing of the past, the transmission belt that had made possible the inter-social travel of values disappeared. The intellectual class, a creative minority without social prestige or political powers, then found it impossible to impose its values on society as it had done in the past.

Where the ancient values are still maintained, therefore, they are diluted. If society keeps them, it keeps them only on its own terms, with "practical" modifications. May the intellectual, in this society, still play his traditional role of detached analyst, creator and critic of ideas? Contemporary society unanimously answers: no. For the intellectual is now considered only one part of society—an equal among equals—and is not thought of as an ambassador from the Land of Truth. He is expected to serve society, not to change it, and society shapes its own destiny without stopping to ask the intellectual's permission. The world marches on, and the intellectual is warned, in more or less friendly fashion, not to obstruct its march in the form of criticism, embarrassing questions, or sarcasm.

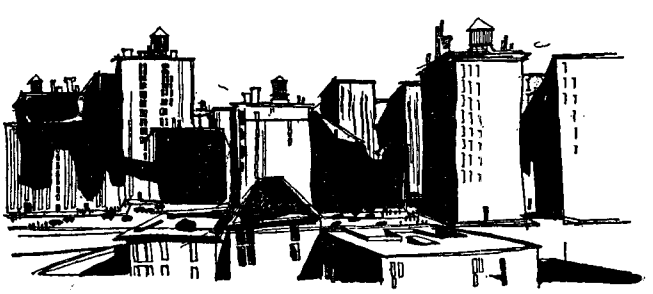
When mass-society is willing to cooperate with the intellectual, the price it asks is that he renounce those very values that constitute his essence as an intellectual. Such an undisputed partisan of the New Society as Karl Mannheim calls attention to the fact that élites are now deprived of the exclusiveness they need for the sublimation of their impulses and the slow, deliberate formation of their principles. In traditional societies, social processes favored the creation of small groups whose life-rhythm would nurture new approaches to the world. Today we see the contrary: social processes are destroying the protective shells within which ideas can mature, and are exposing them, much too early, to the destructive light of public opinion and pseudo-scientific test. (I use "opinion" here in the sense of Socrates' distinction between it and Truth.) Ideas, which were once supposed to serve as a tool for exploring the human condition, have today become objects for distracted curiosity and the stimulus of a moment.

There is no question today of the intellectual's being —let us say, temporarily—asked to step aside until "more urgent matters" have been attended to; the question now is rather of undermining the intellectual *qua* intellectual and replacing him with the social engineer; the intellectual is not asked to adjust his role to modern conditions but to destroy himself; and if he is tolerated at all it is only when he shifts his allegiance from disinterested truth to community endeavor.

There is no doubt that, far from being guiltless victims of democratic processes, the intellectuals have a very real responsibility for their present situation. They themselves battered the walls of spiritual values for so long that when the edifice finally collapsed, the flying stones hit them first. This was not yet apparent in the nineteenth century, when even those who advocated extreme materialism and emancipation from all tradition "went on behaving"—as Gabriel Marcel remarks —"as if they held the religious beliefs they declared they had lost." Today we suffer from the consequences: materialism, a hundred years ago but a threat, is now with us in all its dreariness: we are processed by efficiency and by quantitative standards of measurement and judgment.

IS it too narrow a conception of the role of the intellectual to bind his destiny to the declining fate of the charismatic element in Western society? It is certainly dangerous to succumb to a romantic fascination for the past and accept the simple formula democracy equals anti-intellectualism, but it must be stressed that a quality of gratuity, mysticism and esoterism is inseparable from true intellectual work. In a world which values only the immediately useful, which seeks refuge in ersatz-mysticism, and in which the mass-mind is degraded by vulgarizations of the noble and ready-made answers to the difficult, the very appearance of intellectuality is frequently an illusion. Contemporary concepts of leadership have led our society to this alternative: either the led are right, and then the leader becomes a mere executive of the will of his followers; or else the leader induces the people to *believe* that they rule supreme. The first solution is ineffective, the second dishonest. And the second, furthermore, is responsible for the loathsome propaganda-apparatus that has become a distinguishing sign of twentieth century political life.

Mutatis mutandis: intellectual life follows the same track, and like government, combines these two methods of "serving" the people. For one thing, the range of its concern has increased enormously in a century where private life is continually shrinking, where people demand more and more agencies, public and private, to think, choose and act for them. This, of course, is an inevitable consequence of the complexity of modern life. The high degree of mechanization in contemporary society has produced a number of serialized problems,



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since life submits great masses of people to almost identical conditions. These mass-produced problems call for mass-produced answers, although for reasons of propaganda, "individual and personal" attention is loudly promised.

This smoothly running mass-treatment of mass-symptoms hides from both patient and doctor the reality of the individual: unknowingly, the patient pours his symptoms into prevailing and fashionable molds, and the doctor provides ready-made remedies for his sickness. The metaphysical reality of the individual human being remains, throughout the process, untouched, ignored and despised; the contact between patient and doctor has skimmed the surface, nothing more.

It is obvious that the words "patient" and "doctor" are used here to cover a variety of relationships, all characterized, alas, by superficiality. Unless the intellectual reconsiders his *raison d'être*, his almost forgotten allegiance to ideas rather than to society, we can no longer even speak of "intellectuals" without self-deceit. The terrible web that modern life has woven round us makes us ignore the idea-centered nature of man. But human progress has always been the result of ideas that screened reality and let pass only what mature judgment had censored. Improvements in the human condition have been achieved only through detours, if at all.

Wisdom, so unpopular today, still holds that it is better to let ideas purge themselves before they are incarnated in society—and are purged *there*. The process of purging ideas is an intellectual enterprise, and the mind of the intellectual is the laboratory where it takes place. This laboratory must be closed, and the work that is done behind its doors must be free from public curiosity. Just as pure science is the source that feeds streams of technology and material well-being, so the inter-fusion of ideas must take place freely, without regard for their applicability to the immediate problems that society faces. Under obligation to find *ad hoc* answers to problems ranging from juvenile delinquency to coexistence of nations, the intellectual may set off fireworks of pseudo-solutions, but as they disperse in the sky of reality, they leave only wrecked hopes behind them.

THE offer of co-operation that democratic society extends to its intellectuals is similar to the siren's song: it is a threat as well as a temptation. The threat may range from the intellectual's isolation to the outright rejection of his role in society; the temptation is that he may be persuaded that in the modern world his role is service—not criticism. Loneliness today is considered a dreadful disease; it is said to be dangerous for "mental health," and is feared as an implicit denial of "social concern." It is ironic, however, that loneliness is denounced most loudly by that crowd whom David Riesmann calls "lonely"—the crowd whose basic fear is that solitude will create a breach with the rest of society.

True leadership, however, demands loneliness: the sound and fury of the market-place breeds demagogues, not leaders. One may say it is the destiny of leadership to be misunderstood, and accepted only on the basis of implicit belief and confidence; for if leadership depends on signals from the led, it must by necessity be hesitant, haphazard and, since its chief concern is to remain in power, demagogic.

To what extent a leader should resist the masses is a question I do not wish to consider here. But on the intellectual level it is essential that society be shown itself in a mirror not as it would like to be but as it is—even, indeed, as it would appear from the standpoint of a caricaturist. For there is a permanent danger that society will imagine it has realized its goals when they have been only sketched: it takes more than objectivity to reduce the image carved by collective conceit to its proper dimensions.

What contemporary society demands of its intellectuals (both pseudo and real) is to be of service in the same way as Plato's servants study and obey the habits and whims of the Great Beast. But it is one thing to study society (and become absorbed in it as if it were the supreme reality), and another to teach it modesty, higher values and ideals. The "well-integrated" intellectual, moving as a satellite in the orbit of society, fails to teach, and fears to be penalized by ostracism. The success of his integration is in direct proportion with his unwillingness to create new and bold visions, and thereby to out-distance society. Scared and servile, he ultimately cheats his own master, for only by fixing for society goals that are difficult and even impossible to attain, will he provide fuel for society's progress.

The "socially integrated" intellectual is really not an intellectual at all, but an expert servant. For if Western society has suffered a single great loss in the last hundred years it is the principle of authority; and it is questionable whether the single great gain during the same period, the conquest of science, can make up for it. The scientific method has thoroughly and spectacularly impregnated our life and mentality; team-work has replaced lonely exploration, and the expert laboratory-technician has squeezed the "hero" from his place in public esteem. Modern society's offer of co-operation with the intellectual is, therefore, a sham-offer, since it is extended, not to him, but to the social engineer it expects him to become. The intellectual's salvation, then, is to remember that this siren's song, like the one heard by Odysseus, is false. Let him stop his ears, and tied to the mast of his destiny, wait for more friendly waters.

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Dominican Theologians of Islam

JAMES KRITZECK

DURING the thirteen centuries of their coexistence, Christianity and Islam have shown astonishingly little intellectual curiosity about each other. Through the innumerable contacts afforded them by history, through the Crusades, and even through the great centuries of Arabic translation from Greek and Syriac (750-850) and of Latin translation from Arabic (1150-1250), a state of mutual understanding seldom better than elementary has persisted.

Their modern ignorance does not possess quite the range or piquancy of the ancient, to be sure. Christians no longer believe that Mohammed was a renegade cardinal, nor Muslims that the Virgin Mary is a Person of the Christian Trinity; but they have, for example, continued to accuse each other of polytheism, the last thing of which either is guilty, down to the present time. Today the Christian who can distinguish Sunnite from Shiite is as rare as the Muslim who can tell Catholic from Protestant; if it actually came to a test, I suspect the Muslims would probably do better.

Muslims have always believed, of course, that the Koran supplies them with as much information about Christianity as it is necessary or desirable to have (while not excluding the Divine Inspiration of some Jewish and Christian scriptures in their original forms). Christians, on the other hand, have been seriously handicapped by the imperfection of their traditional sources of information on Islam. By the time Christian Europe was capable of seeing that Islam was neither paganism nor conventional heresy, it was already impatiently persuaded that by their indocility, however untried, the Muslims had forfeited any inheritance in the Christian household. Pope Urban II, in his famous sermon to the Council of Clermont in 1095, did not even mention the conversion of the Muslims to Christianity among the aims of the Crusade he was launching.

A few worthy attempts were made to improve the state of knowledge, however. In 1141 Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, "indignant," he tells us, "because the Latins did not know what this pestilence was or from whence it came," employed a group of scholars (including one Muslim) to translate five Arabic books for him; the first translation of the Koran, by the Englishman Robert of Ketton, was a result of this project. A century and a half later Raymond Lull, the Catalan mystic, philosopher, and poet, applied the full force of his very considerable genius toward the same goal. He learned Arabic, wrote on doctrinal differences, and urged the founding of schools of oriental languages to prepare Christians to deal intelligently with Islam.

These men had their heirs, few and disparate, through the succeeding centuries: Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, Denis the Carthusian, the Discalced Carmelities of Isfahan; perhaps one might count the Jesuits de Nobili of India and Ricci of China among them; certainly, in more recent times, Cardinal Lavigerie, Charles de Foucauld, and Louis Massignon deserve to be placed in their company. No full-scale project has arisen as faithful to the best aspects of this particular heritage, however, as one currently in progress in Egypt. For that reason it richly deserves to be known and applauded.

IN the quarter of Cairo called Abbassiah, on the edge of the desert below the Muqattam Hills, the Dominican Fathers have an Institute of Oriental Studies. Flanked by the National Mint and a tarboosh factory, it is within walking distance of the Muski and the greatest theological school in the Islamic world, al-Azhar. Originally affiliated with the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem and intended to serve as a base of work and travel for students of the Bible, the Dominican house is just twenty years old. Having survived various difficulties during the war, it was organized as an Institute of Oriental Studies after the arrival of Father George Anawati in 1944.

Although the full liturgical life of the Church is led there, in a chapel with an inconostasis and windows patterned after examples in Cairo's Coptic Museum, the Dominicans have no parish, and are entirely freed from other duties to devote themselves exclusively to scholarship. The principal aim of the Institute has been to establish contact with Muslim scholars on a purely scientific basis, mainly in the fields of Islamic theology and spiritual literature in Arabic and Persian. The work, like sound scholarly work anywhere, is performed slowly and silently; it consists chiefly in the editing of texts, the writing of books and articles,

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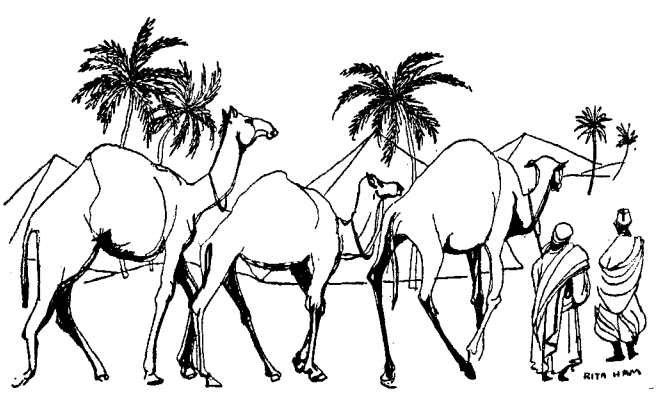
and the reviewing of other work. Recently the first volume of *Mélanges* of the Institute has been published; attractive in format and overwhelming in erudition, it has been commended by other learned journals and by Christian and Muslim scholars everywhere.

Father Anawati, director of the Institute and its only native Egyptian, is a celebrated orientalist. His *Introduction à la Théologie Musulmane*, written in collaboration with Louis Gardet, (Paris, 1948), is a work of enormous value and importance. He has translated into Arabic, in collaboration with M. El-Ahwani, the *De Anima* of Aristotle, and has published a continuous bibliography of Arabic books printed in Egypt during the past ten years. His work on the Arab philosopher Ibn Sina (Avicenna) has brought him into close collaboration with the cultural section of the Arab League. He was, in fact, chosen as a member of the Avicenna Committee of this League, and charged with a mission to study the Avicenna manuscripts in Istanbul. His *Essai de Bibliographie Avicennienne* was published by the Arab League with a preface by its director, Ahmad Amin. Father Anawati also participated in the Avicenna Conferences in Baghdad (1952) and Teheran (1954). Every second year he is a Visiting Professor at Montreal's Institute of Medieval Studies.

Three other Dominicans exclusively devoted to this work are Frenchmen who have been superbly trained in oriental studies at the Ecoles des Langues Orientales and des Hautes Etudes, and at the Collège de France, in Paris. Father Serge de Laugier de Beaurecueuil has for several years been editing Arabic and Persian mystical texts, especially the *Spiritual Journey* of Abdullah al-Ansari, an eleventh-century mystic, and his commentators Mahmud Firkhawi and Abd-al-Mu'ti al-Lakhmi al-Iskandari. His article in the *Mélanges* on the Biblical references in al-Ansari helps to establish the existence of a Judeo-Christian source of nourishment within Islamic mysticism, supporting the work of Massignon, Gardet, Maritain, and Lacombe on the fascinating subject of the range of the interior life in non-Christian religions. Father Jacques Jomier is a specialist on modern Islam, more specifically on modern Koranic exegesis and polemics. He has written



two important books, *Le mahmal et les caravans égyptiennes des pèlerins de la Mecque* (Cairo, 1953), and *Le commentaire coranique du Manar* (Paris, 1954); his study of the widely-publicized controversy of Muhammad Khalafallah's thesis (applying modern critical methods of literary *genre* to the Koran) is published in the *Mélanges*. Father Boilot, a former student of the Ecole Polytechnique of Paris and an engineer of roads and bridges, has recently joined the other Dominicans at the Institute in order to devote himself to a study of the history of mathematics among the Muslims. At present he is working on al-Biruni, one of the most original and important of the Muslim scientists.

THE collaboration of the Dominican Fathers with all Muslim specialists, but especially those of al-Azhar, is intricate but by no means secret. For the past two years scholars from al-Azhar have come to the Institute to use its specialized library of ten thousand volumes, which is open to all of them, and for lunches and discussions. The Dominicans, in turn, visit al-Azhar, work there, present their works, and visit with the Muslim scholars in an atmosphere of cordial friendship. Father Anawati has published in al-Azhar's official journal, *al-Majallah* (very likely the first time a Catholic priest has published in a Muslim theological journal), and has assisted in the doctoral work and examinations of Muslim scholars.

The Dominicans and the Muslim scholars collaborate closely and assist each other in many ways. In the Avicenna work their cooperation occasioned a fellowship from the Vatican Library for a distinguished Muslim scholar, Mahmoud El-Khodeiri. Taha Husayn, Egypt's most famous man of letters, once remarked that "the scholars of al-Azhar must learn to work like the Dominicans," and another Muslim, Ahmad Amin, pointing to the Institute's example, called for a widespread similar "monasticism in science."

The Institute consciously maintains a position as a link or platform between occidental and oriental scholarship. The writings and scholarly travels of the Dominican Fathers help to promote this contact. They obtain Western scholarly materials such as reviews and microfilms for the Muslims, and also bring to the attention of Western orientalists the excellent work done by Muslim scholars, but largely overlooked, during past years.

No steps of any sort are taken to convert the Muslims to Christianity. The Institute's "mission" is single-mindedly scientific and scholarly. "We are not leading the Muslims into a trap," Father Anawati insists, and the Muslims, extraordinarily sensitive to and appreciative of this, have visibly more confidence in the Dominicans than in missionaries.

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The Institute re-echos Peter the Venerable's sentiment on the same question, which is in turn Christ's, that "the Truth will make you free." Without knowing whom, how, or when the Truth will enlighten, it is sufficient to know that it is good in itself. The Dominicans have encouraged parallel programs in Egypt, the Dar-as-Salaam group and the Ikhwan as-Safa, both attempts at a closer dialogue between Muslims and Christians, as well as the new Oriental Institute of the Franciscans under the Custody of the Holy Land, which opened a few months ago in Cairo under the direction of Father Martiniano Roncaglia.

The testimony of this unassuming but heroic group of Dominicans seems to me unusually strong and unequivocal. By its example it calls upon the Christian world to put an end to uninformed and division-fostering attacks on non-Christians; it outlines a difficult and very long-range program of cooperation in intellectual pursuits; but—and this above all convinces me of its superior vision—it promises precisely what Christianity and Islam have always lacked to such a shocking degree in their mutual relations, more comprehension. "More comprehension," Father Anawati wrote once, "so that there may be more love."

LATIN AMERICA

Partners—But What Kind?

CHARLES HENRY LEE

FROM the proclamation of the Good Neighbor Policy in 1933 until the end of World War II, Pan American relations reached a new peak of cordiality. The Hull-Roosevelt policy liquidated the remnants of United States intervention and imperialism and ushered in an era of genuine good feeling throughout the hemisphere. It instituted a considerable increase of cultural and informational interchange. During the war common defense needs greatly strengthened the bonds between this country and Latin America. Some observers even discerned an excess of sentimentality in this relationship.

Much of the credit for the harmony that was achieved must go to the Office of the Coordinator of Cultural and Commercial Relations between the American Republics headed by Nelson Rockefeller. During this period all Latin America's problems or grievances received special attention; in addition to President Roosevelt and Mr. Rockefeller, both Secretary Hull and Under-Secretary Welles were known to be most sympathetic toward the other American Republics.

Our economic aid and collaboration not only permitted these countries to withstand the exigencies of the war but actually enabled them to prosper. With the aid of our raw materials and equipment Latin America industrialized to an unparalleled extent. And it emerged from the conflict with huge unexpended dollar bank balances derived from our purchases of that area's raw materials.

Mr. Lee has had wide experience in Latin America, both as a representative of the State Department and in private business.

It is hardly surprising that our Southern neighbors then believed that they were on the threshold of a new and more prosperous era. The war was over. At last they could purchase many of the things they could not obtain while the fighting lasted. These countries wanted to develop themselves along the lines of their neighbor to the North. Above all they desired to industrialize because they recognized the limitations imposed by purely agricultural economies.

Then came the cold war. The United States found it necessary to devote more and more time and attention to other areas, to problems of greater immediate concern such as Turkey and Greece, European economic recovery, Soviet expansion and the Far East. It was a bitter experience for the expectant Latin Americans to find so many dollars flowing to areas which seemed to them unnecessarily remote. Disappointment gave way to critical opposition to our policy and finally to outright hostility.

Latin America believes that the United States should adopt a more liberal policy on loans for economic development. It also stresses the need for more grants-in-aid. As suppliers of raw materials, the other Americas would like the United States to guarantee a satisfactory price floor for their commodities, and they also want us to commit ourselves to reducing tariffs and eliminating restrictions on imports.

Never in our history have we exchanged more goods and services with Latin America than we do today. Cultural interchange between the two has never been more active. Yet such happenings as the Guatemalan revolution, with the disorders it provoked in Chile and

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other Latin American countries, and the stoning of official American buildings in Brazil at the time of the death of President Vargas, supply ample evidence of the deterioration in our relationship.

THE Eisenhower Administration has clearly been even more handicapped than its predecessor in its relations with Latin America. It has had to convince our neighbors not only of its support of the Good Neighbor idea, but of its serious intentions to implement this profession of friendship. Moreover, it has had the natural desire to give a new twist to its efforts in order to avoid the charge that it was merely carrying out a successful policy developed by the Democrats. That is one reason for the "good partnership" idea advanced at Rio last December.

In order to improve our relations with Latin America the Administration has taken several tangible steps, among them Milton Eisenhower's extensive visit, Senator Capehart's advocacy of restored power for the Export-Import bank, and many of the recommendations of the Randall report on foreign trade. In preparation for the Rio conference, Henry Holland, Assistant Secretary of State, was dispatched to the principal Latin American capitals to outline our proposed new official policy. This was not a wholly palatable task, for we intimated at the outset that we could not underwrite the general financial development of Latin America; instead Export-Import bank aid could be provided in certain special cases. Technical assistance under Point Four in such matters as health, sanitation and agriculture were to be continued. Raw material prices could not be guaranteed, although stockpiling of specific strategic materials would continue.

Mr. Holland also made it known that we could make no commitments on tariffs and quotas, although our Government was prepared to advocate a policy of selective tariff liberalization. There was to be no program of large-scale grants-in-aid, nor was encouragement offered for the proposed Inter-American Finance Corporation. The leading role in the economic development of Latin America was to be given to private enterprise; what economic aid was extended by our Government would only be given under special circumstances and to those nations which did the most to help themselves. The Latin American reaction to these views was one of sincere disappointment.

The address of Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey at the Rio conference itself met with a similar response. Little enthusiasm greeted the suggestion that the good Pan American relations of recent years had developed to the stage of genuine partnership. The climax of his address was to appeal to the Latin American Republics to join with the United States "in common dedication to the policy of the good partner." In a different context these eloquent words, enunciated by someone other than Secretary Humphrey and spoken in a different atmosphere, might have aroused a strong sympathetic reaction. Unfortunately, the problems at issue were no longer political or cultural. They were cold and dreary economic problems. The audience was composed of financial and economic officials who had come in search of swift solutions for practical difficulties of long standing. Their attitude was one of supreme skepticism; they wanted not words but deeds.

In their cool reaction, the economists were typical of Latin American feeling on Mr. Humphrey's appeal for full-fledged partnership, even among those most friendly to the United States. Latin Americans admire our free enterprise and the progress it has made for us, but on the whole they simply do not see the analogy with their own countries. They emphasize their lack of capital resources and the need of government intervention to accomplish rapidly what they feel would otherwise remain undone. They believe that the United States should actively assist their Republics through our technical cooperation programs. They think the economic power of the United States is so great that we should be willing to aid our neighbors until our relative disparity becomes less accentuated, much as handicaps are assigned in an unequal athletic contest to make that game more fair. They contend that in today's world a truly bi-lateral agreement or treaty between the United States and a Latin American nation is practically impossible, simply because of our overwhelmingly superior economic power, and that some appropriate solution must be found to lessen this disparity.

In sum, the difficulty for our Government lies in convincing our neighbors to the South that we are sincerely interested in their welfare, progress and development. Unless our manifestations of goodwill and the proclamation that we are now engaged in common partnership efforts are coupled with more tangible evidences of economic assistance than we are presently prepared to provide, this will not be easy.

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Indian at a Summer School

HE was a small, slight man even for an Indian. When he smiled, which he could do with a good deal of charm, his teeth showed white and even and with a bit of a sharp look to them. His eyes were dark and burning, and when he spoke of the poverty of his countrymen his thin body and his expressive eyes seemed to symbolize all the hunger of the East.

On the first afternoon of the summer school they had a soft-ball game out in front of the dormitory and the men insisted that the Indian play. I doubt if he had ever had a bat in his hand before, but he kicked off his loose slippers, stood up to the plate, swung and hit one. As he scampered down to first base, carrying the bat with him, his team-mates cheered and laughed. At this point they all liked him.

He was very smart and spoke easily and well in a British accent. On Monday and Tuesday he helped out in the class on international affairs. He was very good at explaining the make-up and functions of the United Nations. And he really drove home the contrast between the wealth of America (average annual per capita income $1,650), and the misery of Southeast Asia (Indonesia $90, India $60, Indo-China $32, China $30). "In India," he told us, "life expectancy is thirty-two years. One baby in every four dies before he is one year old. And two in every four die before they are sixteen."

Tuesday night there was a program on international unionism and that was when the trouble started. After singing a few songs together, including one with a chorus that went, "Da-*vee,* Davy Crockett/Joined the CIO," we listened to three union men from abroad.

The first was the president of a new labor federation in Honduras, an eloquent young man who wore a little cross around his neck that showed over his white T-shirt. In short bursts of Spanish, translated by an interpreter from the State Department, he told us of the bitter struggle of the workers on the Honduran banana plantations against the power and might of the United Fruit Company.

The second was a representative of Histadrut in Israel, with another British accent, who made us all envious, and a little skeptical, with his story of the power and might of the Israeli labor federation. By "skeptical" I don't mean that we doubted his report, but rather that we wondered if perhaps Histadrut was not involved a little too deeply on the management side of industry in Israel.

The Indian was last. He stepped up to the blackboard with all the eagerness and assurance of the born teacher, or born missionary, and wrote out the names and memberships of the three major labor federations in his country: the All-India Trade Union Congress, which the Communists had captured during the years before liberation because the anti-Communists were all in jail, and which had once numbered 1,500,000 but was now down to 700,000 and still losing ground; the Indian National Trade Union Congress, which had been organized by Congress Party adherents who broke away from the All-India group and had built it up to a membership of 1,500,000; and a new Socialist federation, to which the Indian himself belonged, which had split away from the pro-Congress group, now numbered 600,000, and was growing rapidly. He told us something of the problems of running a strike of 20,000 workers on a budget of $2,000; of the difficulty of getting dues from workers whose average wage was only ten cents an hour.

Afterwards, in the question period, somebody asked him, "How do the Indian workers feel toward Russia and the United States?" That was the one that started it. He went back to the blackboard and after explaining that the Indians did not particularly like or trust Russia either, he started to write down his charges against the United States. As he did this he made no effort to be diplomatic, but threw them at us with a kind of ringing defiance.

The list went like this: "1. Colonialism. 2. Fascism. 3. Civil liberties. 4. Militarism. 5. Civil Rights. 6. Capitalism."

He charged that America had supported colonial powers in their wickedness and engaged in the vice itself; that it had embraced such Fascists as Franco, Perón, Chiang Kai-shek and Syngman Rhee; that it had violated civil liberties in its treatment of Communists in this country; that it was wasting its wealth in an arms-race with Russia when it could be doing something practical with it to wipe out the causes of Communism throughout the undernourished areas of the world; that it had denied civil rights to its own colored citizens; that it symbolized an economic system that put profits before people.

WHEN the Indian finished with his indictment there was a kind of ominous silence for a few moments. You could almost hear the bristles of patriotism rising all around the room. Then the students began to defend their country and strike back at the Indian as best they could.

One of them asked, "Has the American government

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shown as much friendship for Franco or Perón as Nehru has recently shown toward the leaders of the Russian government?" Another student, who had spent some time in India with the American army during the war, spoke of the great wealth of the maharajahs and the problem of the untouchables.

After the meeting members of the faculty from CIO headquarters, who had felt constrained to be quiet during the meeting, closed in on the Indian and an argument began that went on for the next couple of days. They reminded the Indian of several things: how Nehru had forbidden his own sister, Madame Pandit, to tell the Indians about the slave labor camps in China; how American armaments made it possible for India to thumb her nose at both Russia and the United States.

During one session it came out that the Indian's mother had spent six years in jail while he was a child. We could not bring ourselves to ask him point-blank, but assumed that she was imprisoned by the British for activities in behalf of Indian independence. It also came out that recently his mother had served as a guest lecturer at a university in California and that the university had made her cancel a lecture on Russian art and literature. The Indian contrasted this unfavorably with the fact that some academy of Russian Communist intellectuals had permitted his mother to give them a very critical lecture in Moscow.

The argument ranged over every aspect of Russian, Indian and American life, including the following questions: to what extent Marx was right; to what extent he was wrong; to what extent he misunderstood the relation of private property to power and the relation of power to freedom; to what extent he failed to understand the social value of private property itself; the social and individual aspects of the human personality; village society versus urban society.

In the latter connection the Indian said, "When my mother was in jail, during the time between my third and ninth years, leaving me with no father or other close relations, the people of my village in India took care of me. They considered this the perfectly normal, natural thing to do. Compare this with what would have happened here in America. I would have been shipped off to an orphanage. That is the way people are in a peasant society. They take care of each other."

MOST of the students thought the Indian could have been more tactful in his remarks at the seminar Tuesday night, and some were a little annoyed at him, but not until the picnic on Wednesday night did the feeling really wax warm. I did not make the picnic, but they told me that there was general singing and then somebody asked the Indian to sing a song. He responded with an Indian song that sounded more like a lullaby than anything else, but when they asked him what it meant, he replied, "To hell with America," or something to that effect.

The humor was not appreciated, and some thought that that was really what the song was about. Later that night, when they had returned to the dormitory the Indian asked if he could join a poker game that was going, and one of the students said, "If you get in, I'm getting out."

By the next morning the directors of the school felt that feeling was so high that they should give the students a chance to talk the thing out. One of them, vice-president of an Auto Workers local, got up, delivered himself of a short blast, and walked out. Another joined him. Later he confessed that he thought that the Indian was a Communist sympathizer.

A number of the students defended the Indian. One of them said, "I was hurt myself by the sharpness and the bluntness of his criticism, but for me the experience of meeting and hearing him was invaluable, not only because I liked him, but because he gave me a new insight into how the Indian people live, how they think, and how they feel about America. As a nation we should be big enough to take a little criticism now and then. I am only sorry that the manner of his criticism undid some of the good that he might otherwise have done." Most of the students, I think, shared that sentiment.

JOHN C. CORT.

THE SCREEN

DRAPES OF WRATH

USUALLY a web is spun by a single insect, but "The Cobweb" is spun by practically everyone in the picture's large and good cast. It all starts so simply that one can hardly believe that its mesh can become so complicated. The library, or community sitting room, at a small midwestern psychiatric clinic needs new drapes. And the new head of the institution (Richard Widmark), who's full of modern ideas about therapy, thinks that the Activities Director (Lauren Bacall) is right on the ball in letting the patients make the drapes—especially since one of the most troubled inmates (John Kerr) is so good at design and needs to be appreciated. But what Widmark doesn't know is that his petulant, unhappy wife (Gloria Grahame), whom he has been neglecting lately, has some rather elaborate ideas of her own about the drapes which she's been planning with a rich trustee of the institution. And what none of these people has even an inkling of is that the clinic's business manager

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(Lillian Gish), a set spinster who has a personal interest in the institution, has already decided to buy the drapes—inexpensively. When the full force of these determined personalities swings into action, things begin to happen. As Gloria Grahame puts it early in the game, you can tell the patients from the staff here because the patients get better.

Among the many outstanding things about this movie (which is crowded with characters and problems) is Vincente Minnelli's superb direction of the first-rate cast that also includes Charles Boyer as the departing head-of-the-clinic who resents Widmark's command. Taking advantage of every fact of John Houseman's production in CinemaScope and Eastman Color, Director Minnelli groups and re-groups his characters (Widmark and Bacall; Boyer and Grahame; Kerr and lovely Susan Strasberg; Gish against everyone) according to the good script John Paxton wrote from William Gibson's novel and comes up with a series of fine performances that hold our attention continuously. But the acting never detracts from the story with its insidious, fascinating web that has to be untangled before the finale. Although this untangling comes a little fast after all the tense bitterness and near-tragedy, "The Cobweb" never loses its spell.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

OF NOTE

FAMILY ALLOWANCES

IN its Aug. 6th issue *Ave Maria* [published weekly at Notre Dame, Indiana, by the Congregation of the Holy Cross] presents an article on "The Family Allowance Plan" by John J. Kane, head of the Notre Dame Department of Sociology, part of which is reprinted below:

The sixty-four thousand dollar question, or to be more correct, the four billion dollar question, since this is what the plan would probably cost in the United States, is: do we need a family allowance plan here? Probably the first rejoinder is that income tax exemptions already constitute a form of family allowance. Actually they do, but they fall short in two respects. First, each child under eighteen in a family provides an exemption of six hundred dollars a year. During eighteen years, this means a total exemption of $10,800, but how much does it cost to rear a child to age eighteen? About ten years ago it was estimated that a family with an income of twenty-five hundred a year would spend $7,763 to rear a child to eighteen. If the family income were between five and ten thousand, it would cost $16,337. Against today's cost of living, however, it is doubtful if income tax exemptions approximate the cost of child rearing, even in lower income families.

Wages and costs of child rearing have both increased. Suppose a man has five children, his wife, and himself, to support on an annual income of five thousand dollars. Over the years he will receive a total exemption of $54,000 for his children. Yet by 1944 standards it would have cost a man with such an income $81,685 to rear all five children to age eighteen. This assumes, of course, that there are no unusual medical or educational expenses. By today's standards it would probably cost about one hundred thousand dollars to rear five children to age eighteen. If this child rearing occurred over a period of twenty-five years, and the man's salary remained unchanged, he would have earned one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars during these years. Yet the majority of American families today do not earn five thousand dollars a year. Even it they did, the take home pay would be less because of income taxes, social security, etc., not to mention city and state income taxes.

Today's attendance at college is more and more frequent. This means that child-rearing expenses may not stop at eighteen. In fact, if sons or daughters attend professional schools or graduate schools, such "children" may have to be supported, in whole or in part, until the age of twenty-six or later.

Naturally, it is primarily the obligation of a father to support his own children. The government and other citizens, through taxes, cannot be expected to assume this personal obligation. Yet the government and all Americans do have a concern about the health and welfare of our youth. How does the average family pare down its costs of child rearing to suit its budget? One of the major, but questionable savings, is on medical care. According to the older figures for child rearing costs, families with incomes of twenty-five hundred dollars a year spent an average of three hundred dollars for such care; when family income was between five and ten thousand, families spent almost three times as much. For education, upper income families spent three and a half times as much as lower income families. Lower income families spent a higher percentage of their incomes on children's food, but their actual cash outlay was about fifteen hundred dollars less than upper income families. When it is recalled that lower income families have considerably more children than upper income families, the necessary conclusion is that most American families must skimp on medical and dental care, educational costs, clothing, and shelter for their children. Even the cost of being born shows a tremendous variation between the two types of families; one paying three hundred dollars to the other's seven hundred and fifty.

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Perhaps this helps to explain an earlier finding of the United States Public Health Service that sickness and death rates of both infants and adults were from 150 to 250 percent higher in the lowest income groups than in the highest. Perhaps appropriations for a family allowance might not represent so much more taxes as an ultimate saving in taxes. If this money would raise the level of health and lower the death rate in poorer families, it might likewise decrease present expenditures for institutional care of the physically ill and aid to dependent children.

But the family allowance plan is no panacea, and perhaps the dangers that it will be so thought of is one source of hesitation about it. The sums paid will probably be quite small. They will not offset the need for better incomes for many American families. They will not eliminate necessity for other services, although they may decrease the incidence of need for them. They should be thought of as a step in the right direction toward making possible more adequate child-rearing care in the United States. Further, they will probably have to be given to all families, regardless of income, or a stigma will be attached to receiving them. Some families that do not need them will get them. More importantly, however, most of the payments will go to lower income families, who have most of the children and stand in most need of the money.

As small as these payments may be, they may eliminate the need for some mothers to work outside the home. Today we are gravely concerned about juvenile delinquency, and some of it has been blamed on "latchstring" children, whose parents are employed full time. Even if such children do not become delinquent, they still suffer psychologically as a result of their mother's absence. It would be ridiculous to pretend that the family allowance will necessarily rid us of delinquency. It could, however, help to eliminate one of the reputed causes.

Finally, a family allowance will certainly raise the present tax rate, for whatever savings may ultimately result from it will not be felt at once. For large families, however, the tax increase would probably be more than offset by the payments. In fact, this is one aspect that deserves careful thought, for, if the amount of the family endowment is not large enough to do this, we could have a family allowance system resulting in less real money for some families than under our present system.

Whether the United States decides to adopt a family allowance system or not, the proposal of Senator Neuberger that the Canadian system be studied merits serious attention and consideration. There are many differences between the Dominion and this country. No doubt, if such a plan is accepted here, many modifications will prove necessary. One thought, however, should be uppermost in the minds of legislators and citizens as they consider the family allowance plan. When a man has children, it is wisely said, he has given hostages to the future. What is true of a man is equally true of a nation. The future of America depends in no small measure on the health, welfare, and education of our next generation of citizens, the children of today. If we sell our children short, we sell our country short. The price of the family allowance may prove to be a bargain if it can help purchase for us a healthier, happier future for *all* American boys and girls.

COMMUNICATIONS

"THE RIGHTS OF NON-CONFORMITY"

Spring Hill, Ala.

TO the Editors: In the issue of July 15, The Commonweal devoted a two-page lead editorial to informing us that, "A frightening thing happened to our country on June 15." This ominous event, developed as a minor apocalypse in the paragraphs that follow, was the jailing, under $1500 bail, of twenty-nine New Yorkers, Dorothy Day probably the most illustrious among them, who refused to cooperate in the city-wide atomic-warfare air-raid drill, in which universal participation had been advertised as important and obligatory. The reason given for these twenty-nine's choosing to hold a demonstration in front of City Hall while their several million fellow citizens acted in conformity to the New York State Defense Emergency Act, is their conviction that "there is no defense against hydrogen bombs" and therefore the drill "fostered dangerous illusions," wherefore "they could not in conscience conform."

In the jailing, according to due process of law, of these people, The Commonweal sees a grim threat to human freedom of conscience and American freedom of assembly, observing that with these twenty-nine protestors "we all, in a sense, are jailed." Lest the point escape us, we are reminded of the cases, presumably considered to be analogous to this and to each other, of the burning of St. Joan and the jailing of Henry Thoreau.

After considering the account and interpretation, I find myself conceiving that what the twenty-nine did was wrong but, humanly speaking, inconsequential; that what Judge Kaplan did was right, but hardly more momentous than the wrong; that what The Commonweal did was materially very wrong and possibly rather more important. First of all, what is to be thought of the facts as given?

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In the first place, twenty-nine private persons, mostly practicing social workers, assume that their judgment about thermonuclear weapons and military and civil engineering is at least probably (if we are to justify any action) more reliable than the contrary judgments formed on the same matters, in some cases in view of evidence largely specialized and in part secret, by the Atomic Energy Commission, the U. S. Engineers Corps, the city and state legislatures, and more than ninety-nine percent of the ordinary people. That would seem somewhat ill-considered.

Next, these people seemingly infer that in a case where escape is impossible (assuming that very uncertain hypothesis), to try to escape is a thing so additionally dangerous that even implicitly to encourage such an attempt is too repulsive to conscience to be warranted even by obedience to civil law or fear of prosecution. In other words, if you are *certain* to be killed, it is somehow less dangerous if you don't try to get away. Or perhaps what is meant is a spiritual danger, a proneness to the sin of presumption, nourished by naive trust in futile material safeguards. But is there any real connection between having recourse to temporal precautions against temporal perils and neglecting spiritual precautions against spiritual perils? And does the remote possibility of perishing in a hydrogen bomb explosion really add much in the way of sanction to the proximate certainty of dying one way or another? That would seem somewhat illogical.

Thirdly, these people postpone any noticeable manifestation of their distaste for the principles in question during the four years that they have been embodied in the Defense Emergency Act, until a time uniquely rich in possibilities for histrionic clamor, and uniquely poor in chances for any sympathy from duly constituted authorities. That would seem somewhat unstrategic.

Now The Commonweal pursues this incident as a critical case in point of what it claims is a growing trend in American government: towards curtailing freedom of speech and assembly and despising liberty of individual conscience. It goes out of its way to censure the Catholic press for its failure to acknowledge this profound intimation of the case, and goes on to defend the rights of the "radical" along rather broad and shiny lines, recalling to us the frequent identity of radical and saint, and commenting that a society devoid of radicals is surely dead.

In the light of principles which should be familiar to every Christian, all this seems unfortunately calculated to instill in readers, even rather bright ones, such false notions as the following: that one who considers a civil mandate fruitless or inexpedient may disobey it no less justly than one who regards it as vicious or naturally conducive to the commission of sin; that there is no breach of social justice in the making of oneself an obstacle to measures which the highest and most expert

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authority and an enormous plurality endorse for the saving of millions of lives; that freedom of assembly is a right unqualified by contingencies of crisis and circumstance; that, in the case of Catholics, to perform on moral grounds an act so grave and premeditated is permissible without ascertaining the mind of the Church as communicated by her proper teaching body in the clergy; that "radicalism," in *any* acceptation of that word applicable to the example given, is something *essentially* laudable, and in itself Christian, rather than dependent for its occasional excellence completely upon circumstances, and precisely on circumstances of *disorder, prior* to the acts of radicalism.

During many years now, The Commonweal has been forced repeatedly into an unenviable position. She has championed on excellent, informed, and really traditional grounds, numerous causes that were advanced also by agencies of exclusively radical temper, which causes were opposed or neglected by the conservative Catholic press. That is really courageous journalism and deserves high respect and deep gratitude. But, it would be a sad thing if, from having had to defend so many splendid convictions *despite* their being generally dubbed "radical," she should be led by an insidious fusion of ideas which, however often they may be associated are still utterly diverse, to espouse the cause of "radicalism" in the abstract—a cause that has crippled so much zeal, corrupted so much intelligence, and fostered so much of hell on earth.

J. W. GAFFNEY, S. J.

BOOKS

The Spirituality of Baron von Hugel

LETTERS FROM BARON FRIEDRICH VON HUGEL TO A NIECE. Introduction by the Rev. John B. Sheerin, C.S.P. Edited by Gwendolyn Greene. Regnery. $3.75.

By ANNE FREMANTLE

THIS is a most welcome addition to Regnery's "Thomas More Books To Live" series which already includes that greatest of American Catholic novels, *Weeping Cross,* by Henry Longan Stuart, and Hilaire Belloc's *Path to Rome,* as well as Rogier van Aerde's *Cain* and Sheila Kaye-Smith's *Superstition Corner.* Baron von Hugel was born in Florence in 1852, settled in England in 1871, and died in 1925. Dean Inge, the "gloomy Dean" of Anglican St. Paul's, called him "the ablest apologist for Christianity in our time." These *Letters to a Niece* were first published in 1928, with a long and admirable introduction by the said niece, who only came into the Church after her uncle's death in 1926, and who was already thirty-eight when, in 1919, the talks and letters began.

In his preface, Father Sheerin stresses that "no man has written so luminously as Friedrich von Hugel of the spiritual transfiguration that comes to a soul through the Mystical Body of Christ." He was a penitent of the Abbé Huvelin, and, like the Abbé's other great penitent, Charles de Foucauld, he was anxious to acknowledge his tremendous debt. "I learnt all that I know from Huvelin. What I teach you is him, not me. I learnt it from him. What a great saint he was. And what he taught me!"

In his early life, Baron von Hugel was a friend of Loisy and of Tyrrell, and his name has been smeared by the "guilt of association" with them and others condemned for Modernism in that longest of all Encyclicals, *Pascendi.* But never did his loyalty to the Church waver; never was there a more submissive or committed Catholic than this sterling old German who "often spoke of institutional Christianity as his hair shirt." But he saw clearly the fallacy of purely personal religion. "Our Lord always banded people together . . . always a company, never a purely individual way. Do you sufficiently understand the idea of the Church? Not simply the piling on of persons, the addition of souls, but the separate *Person* of the Church." And only through Christ can we escape "the horror of Pantheism; a great foot, a pierced foot, prevents that door closing." The Church, as he saw her, was "a great ship, first she rolls this way, then she rolls that, till she finds her equilibrium: and then how wise are her judgments! How magnificent her decisions."

He, like Charles de Foucauld, was chary of making converts—but for a different, more personal, reason. For Foucauld, concerned as he was with the most miserable, most abject of human beings, the Muslim of the Sahara, the problem was to demonstrate that with all our Western materialism and civilization, we too had a faith. And we *must* show this before we could preach it—indeed, we could preach it only by showing it. Any other form of proselytism, as Foucauld knew, would only be regarded by colonial peoples as jingoism: part of the trade that follows the flag and is preceded by the guns.

But here the case was somewhat different. At one point von Hugel had unsettled his beloved daughter. In a letter dated 1921 he explains —with what deep contrition and touching humility—how he himself "all unintentionally, indeed for long quite unwittingly, but nonetheless really, put out [her] spiritual eyes." He himself, loving her, had yet "so strained and perplexed that very sensitive young soul" that for years she was left "bereft of all conscious faith." In a way, these letters are a reparation for this fault; and what tremendous reparation!

Step by step, von Hugel leads this woman from history and literature, through all the poets, to the saints, with only one object: "to

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feed your mind and soul." He explains: "We have not got to invent God, nor to hold Him. He holds us. I don't care about ideas, I want facts. God is not an idea. He is a fact." And his recipe for the interior life is "always attending to but one thing at a time . . .The great rule is, variety up to the verge of dissipation; recollection up to the verge of emptiness; each alternating with the other, and making a rich, fruitful tension."

If there was one thing he stressed in these letters, other than that the Church is "the great supernatural home," it was that religion must involve a tension, "a costingness." He never tires of showing the "paradox in Paradise" of Christianity. How clearly it fulfills Heraclitus' requirement, that "strife is justice and all things come into being and pass away through strife," yet "the waking share one world, but the sleeping turn aside, each into a world of his own."

That one world, whose condition is ceaseless tension, included for von Hugel "dullness, dreariness and loneliness. East winds always blowing. Desolation, with certain lucid intervals and dim assurances . . . I have been in the desert ten years." Yet this was the only place for him: the central fact "of religion is not survival, but God." And how delightfully furious he is with the Anglican Canon who said, "God needs us, as much as we need Him." "I never heard Canons helped God to make Saturn's rings," snorts the Baron!

In these days of mental pablum and pre-masticated education, it is good to go through the niece's course of reading: Varro, Tacitus, Allard's *Persecutions*, Prudentius, and the like. And he warns against "churchy-ness." When Gwen "longs for religion," von Hugel urges her to cultivate "interests and activities" which are not directly religious, for there can be no Grace without Nature—although he also says, "To sanctify is the biggest thing out."

Always von Hugel is very German, with his ghastly sentimentalities of address: "my darling Gwen Child mine," and "Child of my old Heart." But he is as sound and solid as the great classical writers he recommends. And it is admirable to have such Germanness so truly Catholic: so much *good* nationalism was lost to the Church at the time of the Reformation—Swedish Catholicism, and also much of the German, Scottish, Swiss, Dutch, and others. This splendidly Teutonic spirituality makes an excellent foil, and variant to, our more usual French, Italian, English or Spanish spiritual reading.

Tale of India

NECTAR IN A SIEVE. By Kamala Markandaya. John Day. $3.50.

By WILLIAM DUNLEA

KAMALA Markandaya has written her saga of a peasant family of modern India in an English fresh and limpid, only slightly ornate in stylization. A Brahmin woman now living in London with

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Although little known in the United States, in Europe the Sisters of Bethany perform miracles of Christ-like charity in re-claiming the women of the streets. To make their work more widely known we have recently published two books: the first, THE STORY OF BETHANY (1 dollar 25 cents) gives the factual and historical background of the Sisters' work, and the struggles of their founder, a Dominican prison chaplain of the last century. The second, NEITHER WILL I CONDEMN THEE (1 dollar 25 cents), gives a graphic picture of the Sisters' present day work and its lesson for all Christians who pride themselves on their sincerity. The author of this title is the distinguished German Dominican, Father Franziskus Stratmann, who when in hiding from the Nazis spent five years in a Bethany Convent.

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an English husband, she never lived as one of the people she tells about, yet she seems to know them well, and they are believable.

They who must—or who choose to—live by the land have a precarious time of it everywhere, but in that subcontinent squalor is extraordinarily prevalent, and merciless drought and savage monsoons take a heavy toll of the crops. Although the rice-growers of this story are not the worst off—and are admirable for their innate courage before all the trials that afflict them—nature is both their livelihood and their enemy. It is theirs but to work in hope and fear, then wait and pray. But still, in their humble pride, Rukmani, her husband Nathan, their daughter and countless sons know something of peace and quiet satisfaction until a tannery goes up not far from their little hut and paddy: nature takes her pound of flesh, but so does man.

Without the intrusion of the tannery the writer would merely be saying that the simple, sweet, and painful experiences of everyday are sacred in their constant but unique reality; or, with so many of our own novelists, that life is an enigmatic ritual of inevitable accidents. Here the arrival of the tannery introduces a new note: industrial progress, which can at once improve and degrade the lot of those who toil. Nevertheless, the book could not maintain its balanced presentation without eschewing ambitious polemic, and historical exactitudes lie in shadow. A white man oversees the tannery, but there is a white doctor dedicated to the natives; they are overawed by him—he has cultivated a sympathetic aloofness—and he is baffled by their traditional cult of the earth (even when it is unyielding), and their religious resignation to deprivation.

Ordinarily we suspect that Asiatics are too laden with mystic dreams to be aroused, but the people here are too active in the only life they know. Miss Markandaya views numerous human types found in every society with a shrewdness we are accustomed to as "Western;" and yet she can jolt us into a realization that the color bar is double-edged. By assuming the impersonal "I" (that of Rukmani in retrospect), and its intimate objectivity, she does manage to make the Indian peasant's attitude patterns more vital to us without sacrificing their remoteness.

Yet there remains a problem of approach, with the impersonal "I" subtly wrong, so that it becomes the measure equally of the individual beauties and strengths and of the limited scope of the book as a unit. If in various respects *Nectar in a Sieve* were not a striking first novel, this could go as academic; it would be put aside appropriately as a warming experience. The good peasant mother reads and writes but differs in no other discernible fashion from other good but inarticulate peasant mothers, save that she is "writing" this book. It is a too complaisant, if never ingratiating "I" that precludes any direct association on the reader's part, a stream of consciousness missing psychological depth and proportion.

Nectar in a Sieve is true without being revealing, promising not remarkable. Still, for all its hybrid qualities, it need not be consigned to a literary limbo; its literary success might not be clear-cut, yet in its pre-eminently sentimental vein it could become a classic. The author shows skilful artlessness in persuasion of the sentiments; she renders no opinions, but conveys the eloquence of resignation. While we feel for her people—who pray to God and "the gods" in the same breath—and not with them, the pity she enlists is more honest than if she had designed her tableaux for that growing number who think even wisdom should be exotic.

Lloyd George

TEMPESTUOUS JOURNEY. By Frank Owen. McGraw-Hill. $7.

By GEOFFREY ASHE

ONE of the principal figures in the depression era was the European Roosevelt who never happened. Indeed, he is still not happening. Pierre Mendès-France has been the most recent inheritor of his spectral role. The Axis dictators were diabolic travesties of him; Hitler's financial chief Dr. Schacht laboriously exploited a strained parallel between the New Deal and Nazism. But the nearest thing to the elusive manifestation took place in England. It nearly came off and then didn't. The road was mapped, the leader stood ready, the trumpet sounded, and the people marched in the opposite direction.

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8/19/'55

Lloyd George was a legendary hero of the kind that anthropologists used to explain away as a Solar Myth. He rose triumphantly from humble beginnings, he vanquished the powers of darkness at home and abroad, and he sank from his meridian looking westward and turning pinker. Frank Owen's biography is a titanic affair well suited to the Celtic Hyperion. But what went wrong? Why did the Liberal New Deal never get a chance?

David Lloyd George, a Welsh lawyer with superb oratorical gifts, opposed the Boer War and climbed rapidly in the reaction that followed it. As Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1910 he launched social-security measures and initiated the attack on the Lords which deprived the Upper House of its veto. Because of him, there glimmered on the horizon a real hope that British Capitalism would save itself through controls and concessions without a Socialist phase. Yet . . . people did not quite trust him. Cecil Chesterton struck the first damaging blow by exposing a dubious, just-legal Government deal with the Marconi company by which the Chancellor profited. Chesterton made reckless charges which could not be proved, but the small damages awarded by the court gave him a moral victory which Mr. Owen underrates.

As Coalition Prime Minister in the first World War, Lloyd George revealed his energy and ingenuity to the best advantage. Against frightful opposition, forcibly portrayed in this book and all too easily forgotten, he held his team together and sustained British strength and influence. Labor spokesmen campaigned for peace, yet Lloyd George kept Labor in the Government. The Conservative leader in the Peers called for negotiations with Germany, yet Lloyd George rallied the Conservative Party behind the war effort. Even Clemenceau conceded British supremacy; even Winston Churchill consented to serve.

The cost of this marvelous feat of acrobatics became evident after the war. All the personal horse-trading with other parties had com-

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promised the Prime Minister's position and aroused unappeasable resentments. Little by little these undermined him. He attacked the Irish problem and provisionally succeeded. He attacked the Turkish problem and unequivocally failed. Once down, he never got up again. His party fell to pieces. It reunited to support Macdonald's first government, then shipwrecked in the election which turned him out, and split forever. There were "Lloyd George Liberals" and "Asquith Liberals" and later "National Liberals." A fund for political action and research came under Lloyd George's control, and mysteriously turned into something much too closely resembling a private fortune. The ghost of Marconi walked again.

During his last fifteen years Lloyd George published reports and proposals outlining his New Deal. He rose above all others in his prophetic advocacy of the need for a return to the land. He wrote a syndicated column, for fabulous fees. He dominated cartoons and elections—Mr. Owen might well have given us a few pages of cartoons. But he never came back. His following in the Commons dwindled to a family clique, of which the survivors have now joined other parties (Gwilym Lloyd George is a Conservative, Megan is Labor). It was rather as if the Democrats had broken up into a Truman group, a Dixiecrat group, and a liberal group headed by the Roosevelts. The whole story raises extremely interesting questions about the status of brilliant individuals in parliamentary politics.

BISHOP OF THE WINDS. By Gabriel Breynat. Kenedy. $3.75.

THE genial reminiscences of this heroic Oblate missionary supply considerable lore about the natives of the Canadian Northwest. Bishop Breynat's first assignment set him among the "Caribou people," a group of Indians notable for their natural virtues and goodwill on every score but the servile treatment accorded to their women. The caribou, which are still unbelievably plentiful, supplied basic needs of food and clothing, even thread for sewing and fats for many purposes.

Typical of the author's many arduous journeys of the past half-century was his five-hundred-mile trip by dogsled to be consecrated bishop—"over terrain marked by numerous forests, rivers and lakes where the temperature was usually thirty to forty degrees below zero." Frozen fish to feed the dogs served him "as a good mattress." Some of the Eskimos of his new flock proved to be far less tractable than the noble savages to whom he first ministered. And amputation of frozen toes appears to have been a commonplace in Athabasca, Mackenzie and the Yukon. In his zeal Bishop Breynat withstood rigors such as these for fifty years.

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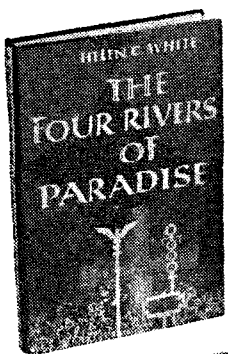

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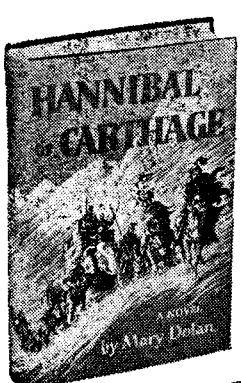

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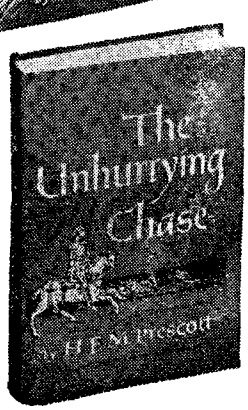

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